

## Top FE talent celebrate 100 years of EMFEC



Above L-R: Paul Eeles, CEO of EMFEC, John Hayes MP, minister for FE and John Allen, Principal of Lincoln College and Chair of EMFEC See pages 12 & 13

Monday 23 January 2012

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# Shock as top bosses step down



**Nick Reinis & Nick Summers**

Urgent action has been called for following the shock announcement that two of the sector's biggest names are to leave their posts.

Unexpectedly and simultaneously, Geoff Russell, Skills Funding Agency (SFA) chief executive, and Simon Waugh, chief executive of the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), revealed on Tuesday their plans to step down.

Mr Russell (above), who has held the post since the SFA's inspection in April 2010, will retire at the end of the July, while Mr Waugh (right) will

leave at the end of March following the completion of his initial three-year contract.

The news has been met with shock in further education (FE), with the timing also questioned - as it came just weeks after a government inquiry into apprenticeships, including funding and the role of NAS, was launched.

Gordon Marsden, shadow minister for FE, feels the government needs to react quickly to the pair's decisions.

He said: "The simultaneous and unexpected announcement that the two key people directing the government's skills funding and apprenticeships policy are resigning is bound to raise serious questions and concerns in the sector as to the future delivery of BIS's apprenticeships, FE and skills programmes with increased demands on the NAS from government and stretched staffing with overall government cuts.

"Ministers will need to respond to such concerns fully and urgently."

Toni Pearce, NUS' vice president for FE, added: "I am particularly surprised Simon Waugh's announcement has come at a time when the BIS Select Committee is holding an inquiry into apprenticeships.

"The quality of apprenticeships has been questionable and the learner experience in some case has

been poor. I hope that the announcements pave the way for a new era at NAS and a new guarantee for a quality learner experience."

She also added: "It's definitely a surprise that Geoff's decided to retire, but I hope his replacement keeps up the hard work on student voice."

The simultaneous nature of the pair's announcements has also been questioned.

However, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, said both wanted to reveal their plans "as soon as possible" after Christmas.

A spokesperson said: "The two announcements were made together to ensure that staff and the sector were provided with the full picture.

"We will announce the process to recruit replacements shortly."

In announcing his decision to retire from the SFA, Mr Russell said his task "is complete" and "it is time to move on".

Despite saying he had no firm plans to leave during an interview with *FE Week* in October 2011, Mr Russell informed BIS of his plan in August last year.

It will be his second retirement, having retired from KMPG, before being offered the role of chief executive of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) from March 2009 until

the Agency was set up.

Mr Russell has previously admitted he found out about his role at the LSC via a news story on the BBC website and was only intending to stay for a year.

Mr Russell said: "I have thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of establishing the Agency and re-shaping it to meet the needs of the further education sector.

"I am proud of the critical role the Agency is playing in establishing incentives and accountabilities to assist the further education and skills sector to respond creatively, flexibly and dynamically to the demands of employers, learners and communities. With my task complete, it is time to move on."

Mr Waugh's decision, meanwhile, follows a turbulent six months for the NAS, including a dramatic rise in the number of new apprentices aged over 25, as well as the launch of a review into the quality and duration of all apprenticeship schemes.

However, he said the move was so he could spend "more time with his family" and he had achieved all he "set out to do".

He said: "After the considerable success of the past three years I believe that this is a good time to move on.

"It was a very difficult 2011 for my



family and I look forward to working part time and spending more time with them."

Mr Waugh said that he is "immensely proud" of the NAS' achievements, before later adding: "NAS has clearly demonstrated itself as an organisation that responds creatively, flexibly and dynamically to demands of employers, individuals and communities.

"Apprenticeships are at the heart of our drive to equip people of all ages with the skills employers need to prosper and compete, which is why we are investing record amounts in increasing numbers and quality."





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# UCU case against IfL has now been ‘discontinued’

**Nick Reinis**

@fenickr

Legal proceedings between the University and College Union (UCU) and the Institute for Learning (IfL) have been discontinued.

The move comes after the individual claimant in the case, who is a member of the UCU, which has been supporting the action, took on a new job in higher education (HE), where membership to the IfL is not required.

However, it is not the end of the saga, which began in the summer when the union's members voted to boycott the IfL over plans to introduce a £38-a-year membership fee.

While the IfL has welcomed the news, the UCU say the court action could be resurrected - with the government's review into regulating and facilitating professionalism of FE and skills workforce pivotal to future action.

The UCU, which announced a suspension of the legal threat when the review was announced by the government in September, said the discontinuation of the case took place earlier this month when the claimant's move to HE was confirmed.

The UCU's general secretary, Sally Hunt, said: "The prompt for discontinuance was the claimant moving to higher education.

"If that had not happened we expect the action would have stayed in the court until the review had been completed."

Although unaware of any members' employment being under threat by not paying the membership, she added: "In the unlikely event a change of situation occurs we can swiftly re-apply using another UCU member working in further education as the claimant."

Meanwhile, IfL chief executive, Toni Fazaeli, said: "IfL welcomes the discontinuation of the High Court proceedings brought against IfL by a University and College Union member with

UCU's support.

"IfL believes in peaceable ways forward, working in partnership with unions and employers, rather than through the courts, in the interests of teachers and trainers, their learners and our sector as a whole."

However, while the UCU has claimed that both sides have acknowledged the issues can still be taken before court, the IfL feels it would be a matter for the court to decide.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills said the review, which is due to last three months, will soon get underway.

As well as professionalism, the review will also take account of the "broader context" of the strategy of Skills for Sustainable Growth and the belief that building status of workforce is "central to building and promoting the reputation" of the sector.

The spokesperson said: "A preliminary planning meeting for the review took place last week. We will announce the start of the review and full details shortly.

"It will be for the independent review itself to determine who is invited and what other evidence and views need to be gathered."

Mrs Hunt added: "We anticipate that the review will address the issues in contention.

"UCU members will not however, pay for any professional body that is not perceived to have added value or bring benefits to its members."

Mrs Fazaeli added: "We look forward to contributing to the independent review of professionalism in the further education and skills sector.

"This review and our work with the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) to support an independent commission on adult education and vocational pedagogy will be key priorities for IfL in the coming weeks, as we continue working to promote the status and professional interests of teachers and trainers."

## Further 16-18 apprenticeship funding rate reduction

**Nick Summers**

@SummersNicholas

The government is proceeding with plans to reduce the national funding rate for 16 to 18 apprenticeships by another two per cent next year, despite under-spending by £15m in 2010/11.

The rate reduction comes as youth unemployment continues to break records, which for 16 and 24 year-olds increased by 52,000 during the three months ending in November 2011, hitting a staggering 1.04 million.

A spokesperson for the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) said: "The YPLA announced in its 16-19 Funding Statement in December 2011 that the national funding rate for 16-18 Apprenticeships will be reduced by two per cent in 2012/13. At the end of March, the Agency will publish the Funding Rules for 2012/13, which will include the national funding rates."

The Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) said the reduction would cause a "tension" between quality and volume.

"We regret this proposed reduction and it probably needs to be looked at again in the context of the recent announcement about a minimum one-year duration for 16-18 apprentices," an AELP spokesman said.

"There is universal agreement that young people should be receiving quality training on an apprenticeship and quality provision comes at a cost. Therefore when the government is trying to grow the number of young people starting apprenticeships, a rate cut could create a tension between increasing volumes and maintaining quality."

The national funding rate for apprenticeships aged between 19 and 24, as well as 25 and over, will remain unchanged in 2012/13.

The SFA has also revealed "the under spend on the 2010/11 financial year for 16-18 apprenticeships was £15 million, which represented less than two per cent of the budget."

Gordon Marsden MP, shadow minister for FE, has called on the government to increase the number of apprenticeships for young people at small and medium sized businesses.

## FE Week news in brief

### Merger plan unveiled

A consultation is underway for the proposed merger of Lewisham and Southwark Colleges.

The document sets out an "exciting and radical vision for a college of the future" in south-east London.

It adds: "Lewisham and Southwark Colleges firmly believe that by working together we will be able to get more local people into work and support the businesses that are transforming our communities."

For more, visit [www.lewishamsouthwark.co.uk](http://www.lewishamsouthwark.co.uk)

### Success rates are due

The Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) will publish 2009/10 school and academy 16-19 qualification success rates on February 2.

The 16-19 success rates show, at a headline level, the proportion of young people that start a qualification in an institution and achieve it by the end of the required period of study.

This measure has been used in the college sector for many years and is considered to be a key indicator of an institution's performance.

School and academy success rates are not yet directly compatible with college success rates, say the YPLA.

### New register launched

The new Register of Training Organisations has been launched.

It follows an extensive review and evaluation of the former Approved College and Training Organisations Register (ACTOR) during 2011.

All organisations that wish to be considered for funding to deliver Education and Vocational Training Services, including European Social Funding and Apprenticeships will need to complete the Due Diligence Gateway Assurance process.

The exemption extended to some providers last year will not operate in 2012/13, which means that some will need to complete the Assurance Gateway for the first time.

He said: "Apprenticeships have a key role in play in providing new opportunities for young people and boosting growth across the regions. For all the government's rhetoric on apprenticeships, they are still failing to create enough places for young people, while many smaller sized businesses feel unable to take part."

Proposals by Labour include redirecting money from the Growth and Innovation Fund into a new 'Apprenticeships Innovation and Collaboration Fund', designed to encourage smaller firms to take on a young apprentice.

John Hayes MP, minister for further education, skills and lifelong learning, has said he will "focus" on improving apprenticeships for people aged 16 to 24.

Mr Hayes, speaking at an apprenticeships debate in the House of Commons last month, said: "It is important that we focus apprenticeships on where they are of most value, and there is more evidence to suggest that they are of most value to young people between the ages of 16 and 24; and, secondly, it is important that we are relentless in our drive for quality."

# Case for employer ownership unclear

Nick Summers

@SummersNicholas

The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) has confirmed its most recent report was drawn up using no new data or research.

Proposals made in the *Employer Ownership of Skills* report were suggested by the 23 UKCES commissioners, of which three represent both further and higher education, and three represent small and medium-sized employers.

The UKCES says the proposals, which include increasing the amount of public funding given directly to employers for apprenticeships and training, address some of the issues highlighted in The Youth Inquiry and the Employer Perspectives Survey 2010.

"The solutions we're proposing - one of which is to route some public funding for employer-facing skills through employers in return for greater private investment - isn't contained within these reports," a spokesperson for UKCES said.

"That's because they (quite genuinely) came directly from our commissioners, who are a mix of large and small employers, representatives from FE and HE, Unions, third sector, etc."

She also added: "The documents set out some of the problems - the two different skills systems, the comparative lack of employer interest and investment in the publicly-funded skills

system and so on.

"So we know for definite that the issues are real."

The UKCES report suggests funding employers directly for apprenticeships through the tax system, as well as reviewing the effects of current policy and infrastructure on employer ownership.

It states: "We propose that Government Invite employers to step up to the challenge of bringing more young people (16-24) into the productive workforce by funding employers directly for apprenticeships, for example through the tax system (e.g. via National Insurance rebates) and incentivising work experience."

The report says an increased amount of public funding would help create "a more responsive training provider network" and encourage employers to contribute more to vocational training. Other benefits include allowing colleges and training providers to compete based on quality and innovation, rather than volumes and government priorities.

The 157 Group, however, says it is "not clear" whether all small and medium sized employers (SMEs) are supportive of the reforms.

"Many strongly value the role of colleges and other training providers in sorting out the administration and reporting that has to be associated with spending public money," said Lynne Sedgmore CBE, executive director of the 157 Group.

"It is not clear whether all SMEs want this

reform."

The Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) says the UKCES proposals will only be successful if they manage to persuade employers to contribute more of their own money towards training.

"The move to reposition apprenticeship and skills development as an employer responsibility is enthusiastically supported, but we must watch out for dead-weight," said Graham Hoyle, chief executive of the AELP.

"The aim and the ultimate success of the new proposals must be to persuade more employers of the economic benefit of increasing their investment in their skills agenda, leaving the government to continue supporting the many individuals who are wanting to get onto the first step of the ladder in order to start confidently moving upwards."

Sean Taggart, UKCES commissioner and chief executive of The Albatross Group, supports the proposals and said direct funding would not simply be used as a "giveaway" for businesses.

He said: "This public investment will be used to leverage greater private investment in skills development.

"Colleges, schools and learners have been asking for improved access to employers and this is a real opportunity for that to happen, with benefits for all concerned.

"It's important to remember that this is not a giveaway."

## Latest Ofsted grades

College inspection reports published January 11, 2012, to January 18, 2012.

### Burton and South Derbyshire College

Inspection grade (Dec 5, 2011): 2

Previous inspection grade (Nov 26, 2007): 2

### Askham Bryan College

Inspection grade (Dec 5, 2011): 2

Previous inspection grade (Oct 1, 2007): 3

### Southwark College

Inspection grade (Dec 5, 2011): 4

Previous inspection grade (Mar 15, 2010): 3

### Bishop Auckland College

Inspection grade: (Nov 21, 2011) 2

Previous inspection grade: (Nov 26, 2007) 2

### Plumpton College

Inspection grade: (Nov 21, 2011) 2

Previous inspection grade: (Jun 4, 2007) 2

### Sussex Coast College Hastings

Inspection grade: (Nov 21, 2011) 4

Previous inspection grade: (May 12, 2008) 3

### Stephenson College

Inspection grade: (Nov 21, 2011) 3

Previous inspection grade: (Dec 4, 2006) 2

Key: Outstanding (1), Good (2), Satisfactory (3), Inadequate (4).

Note: Grades are from inspection reports only.

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FE Week investigates...

# Schools restricting college access

Nick Summers

@SummersNicholas

Schools with sixth forms are giving students biased advice and restricting the access of colleges and training providers, according to a report by the 157 Group.

The policy paper, titled 'Information is not enough: the case for professional careers guidance', calls for more schools and colleges to offer impartial guidance, as well as face-to-face careers advice from a specialist.

It states: "The lack of impartial advice and guidance in many schools with sixth forms has been well documented over the years and is acknowledged to be a major problem in many communities.

"As more schools acquire sixth forms, and thereby a perverse incentive to restrict the awareness of the full range of options for their students, the problem will get worse."

The 157 Group says they are concerned how the Department for Education (DfE) has removed earmarked funding for the careers service and left securing careers guidance down to the discretion of individual schools.

The report states: "While some schools will no doubt provide an excellent service, it is equally probable that many will not; and a school based system will never be able to relate systematically with provision for adults to provide a seamless service for users at each stage of their learning journey."

The DfE has admitted that current careers advice is "poor quality" and "patchy".

"We make no apologies for giving schools responsibility for providing independent, impartial careers advice," a DfE spokesperson

said.

"They know their students best - so it's right they should decide what provision is right and that they have complete control over their budgets to buy in the support that pupils need."

The spokesperson added: "Young people need good quality careers advice - but the sad fact is that too much provision at the moment is poor quality and patchy.

"We are due to consult shortly on expanding this duty on schools and colleges for pupils up to the age of 18."

The 157 Group says cuts in entitlement funding for schools and colleges is making it increasingly difficult to fund visits, work experience and high quality guidance for learners.

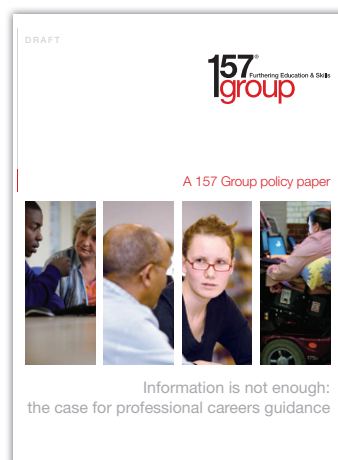
The report adds that while many learners will appreciate the online and telephone services offered by Learndirect and Next Step, most will want face-to-face contact to be able to interpret the information available to them.

"Although we are supportive of Next Step, we are still pushing for an entitlement to face-to-face careers guidance for people of all ages, as this is what we feel makes

a real difference to achieving effective IAG with positive outcomes for all," said Lynne Sedgmore CBE, executive director of the 157 Group.

The report says cuts in local authority funding are causing a huge loss in the number of qualified advisers, and that school pupils are often ill-informed about the qualifications they are achieving.

Steve Higginbotham, Immediate Past President of the Institute of Career Guidance, said: "With the demise of Connexions and major reforms to the careers service taking place at a time of rapid economic change, we fear that many young people will lose the option of face to face guidance, and that services for adults will not be able to meet the demands placed upon them."



## Lynne Sedgmore Q&A



**Q) The report says many schools with sixth forms are restricting the access of colleges and other providers. Is this a new issue?**

Unfortunately we understand there have always been examples of restrictions on access, intentional or otherwise, but there are also examples of strong partnerships in existence and we encourage more schools and school sixth forms to work in collaboration with colleges and other providers. It would be speculation to say whether this has grown into a much larger problem, but of course with recent policy changes and challenges, the climate is much more competitive out there, so it is understandable, if not helpful to learners, that institutions would want to protect their own interests.

**Q) If a school pupil is ill-informed about the currency of the qualification they are receiving, how will this affect their progression into FE?**

It is inevitable that this would affect their progression into FE or into any other pathway that they desire to break into, and in some cases individuals would not

be able to enter a course for which they thought they had qualified. This is why in our paper we argue for the importance of impartial guidance around qualifications and options. Early prevention and the flow of effective IAG from school days and beyond improves the chances of progression into further and higher education as it keeps learners engaged with the curriculum and system.

**Q) Is the role of face-to-face support, either from qualified staff or advisers under threat?**

This is under threat for young people but it is of paramount importance. Although we are supportive of the government's Next Step and Learndirect services, this is not enough if we are to take seriously the issues around effective careers education and guidance. For many people face-to-face support is much more accessible, personal and encouraging than over-the-telephone services.

**Q) Do you think the National Careers Service will solve some of these problems? Does it have the capacity to cope with FE?**

We need to be optimistic about the National Careers Service. With the support of key stakeholders we think it does have the capacity to work with FE and to help solve some of these problems for adult learners. We are more worried about the loss of services for young people as in a changing and complex landscape, we need more than ever accurate information, advice and guidance to be made available via a professional workforce.

## £60m yacht? That could give 45,000 students EMA, says NUS

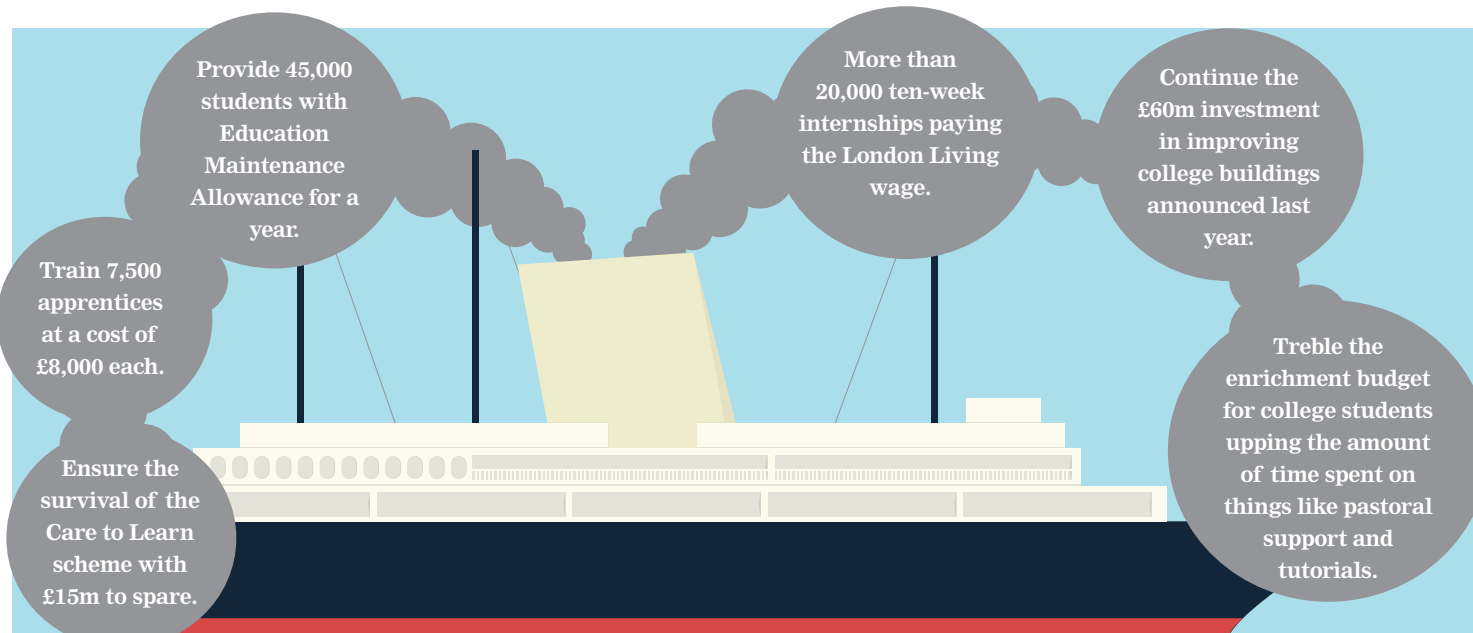
The National Union of Students (NUS) has suggested how the estimated £60 million needed to buy a new yacht for the Queen could be spent improving FE.

Education secretary Michael Gove made the suggestion in a letter to Nick Clegg and Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt last week.

David Cameron has since rejected the proposal, saying it would be an inappropriate use of public money.

Liam Burns, President of the NUS, said: "Thankfully this ridiculous idea has already been ruled out but we felt it was important to remind Mr Gove and Mr Willets what benefits £60 million could bring to education."

Some of the suggestions made by the NUS include giving 45,000 students EMA for a year and continuing the improvement of college buildings.





## FE Week profile

## Tom Wilson ~ his story

Janet Murray

@jan\_murray

The unionlearn director talks to *FE Week*

Raised in rural Shropshire, in a family that was “very middle of the road” politically, Tom Wilson was an unlikely teenage leftie. In fact, his parents - both teachers - regarded his political awakenings with some amusement, he says.

Educated at Wellington Grammar School, which “had pretensions to being a posh school but was in fact a very ordinary grammar school,” he was inspired by the example of former pupil Len Murray, who went on to become the general secretary of the TUC. “This was back in the early 70s and me and my mate Desmond, whose dad was convenor at GKN Sankey - a local engineering company - were sort of radical lefties,” he recalls. “We were fixated on the fact that if Len Murray came from our ordinary school and he was general secretary of the TUC, well then we could do the same.”

Having studied hard at school - something he jokes was down to growing up in a small village and having “nothing else to do” - Wilson went on to St. Andrew’s University, where he studied philosophy, got heavily involved in student politics and spent a lot of time arguing with “rising young Thatcherites.” It was an exciting time to be a student; St. Andrews was the first university to opt out of the National Union of Students - a move Wilson fought against - and the protest movement had begun to gain momentum.

But it was working during the university holidays that really started to shape his political interests, he says. During his time at St. Andrew’s he worked in construction, on factory production lines, as a hospital porter and, in perhaps his most unusual job, cooked breakfasts for workers on an oil-rig in Scapa Flow, off the Orkney Islands.

“I always think actually I learned more from those experiences than I ever did from university,” he says. “I learned what life was like for ordinary working people and how bloody awful and boring lots of peoples’ jobs were. That was where I got into learning for the first time, because it really kind of impressed upon me, that in those days particularly, if you didn’t do well at school and you hadn’t got yourself into college or university you were stuck. You were stuck in some dead end boring job for the rest of your life.”

His experiences pressed upon him the significance of his upbringing, of being brought up around books, with parents who encouraged him to study. While many of his colleagues were equally, if not more intelligent and well-informed as him, the hand they had been dealt in life meant that

while he would be going back to university - and a choice of jobs or careers, many of his colleagues “were stuck there forever.”

But he admits his empathy was misdirected at times. He recalls one job, working for the Pepsi Cola bottling factory in Acton, west London, where “basically, the job was to wade up to your knees in broken glass and sticky kind of Pepsi that was all over the floor” taking bottles off the production line and putting them in plastic crates. Having seen a notice pinned to the wall that made him realise that the recruitment agency he and his colleagues - many of whom were African immigrants - were employed by, were giving the workers half what they were being paid by the company, he was incensed.

But he soon found colleagues didn’t necessarily share his views. “I said to the bloke next to me ‘Look at this, we’re getting paid half - why is the agency getting all this money?’ And he was horrified that I was kind of rocking the boat a little bit and because he thought it was a really good job and he thought I was mad to get upset about it or protest about it...he could see it was completely unfair that the agency was ripping us off to that extent, but he thought it was inconceivable that anyone could do anything about it.”

After university, Wilson did a diploma in Social Administration at York University, followed by a Masters in Industrial Relations at Warwick. After a brief spell working as a journalist, on a magazine for trade union officials, he moved to the GMB, where he spent six years doing research, speech writing, drafting wage claims and teaching shop stewards. He then moved to the Labour

“I’m not saying unions are perfect, but I’ve always felt more comfortable in a union than any political world.”

Party, where he spent three happy years as their national trade union liaison officer and got to know some of those, like Peter Mandelson, who went on to be part of the government. “I know he isn’t terribly fashionable in some quarters, but he was a very personable, bright bloke,” he says of Mandelson. “I didn’t always agree with his politics but then so what - you never agree with everyone’s politics. He was a very interesting guy and unlike some others, he was genuinely interested in the relationship between the trade unions and the Labour Party.”

There were many ups and down in the job, but the biggest low was the 1987 election, says Wilson. Having “ate, slept and breathed” the campaign for weeks, losing the election



- Labour’s fourth successive defeat - was a crushing blow.

After three years working for the party, by which time he had two small children, he realised the job wasn’t compatible with normal family life. He moved to the Association of University Teachers (now known as UCU, since its merger with the National Association of Teachers of Further and Higher Education Nafthe in 2006), where he stayed for the next 15 years in a variety of roles, including head of research.

Wilson joined the TUC in 1993 as head of organisation and services and was appointed director of their learning and skills organisation, unionlearn in 2009. He is immensely proud of the introduction union of learning reps, a new kind of union activist role that is concerned with helping employees access learning and training - which he says are “massively important and the foundation of everything we do.” The biggest challenge for unionlearn at the moment, is moving employers on from awareness to action, from wanting unions “just to be kind of cheerleaders for what they do, to a genuine kind of equal and open discussion where they sit down and are prepared to actually negotiate properly and openly about the way they organise their training.”

More broadly, the challenge for the union movement is being clear that while it does not support many of the government’s policies (particularly its stance on pensions), it does acknowledge the support the government is providing for skills and training.

Wilson speaks warmly of the skills

minister John Hayes, who he says is “engaged, supportive and interested” and “plainly cares about unionlearn.”

But he is not so effusive about the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), who he says “are supposed to represent British employers and they don’t really do enough in my opinion to argue the case for better and fairer investment in training...”

In his vision for a fairer education system for all, there would be a National Learning Service, instead of the “fragmentary patchwork” of further and higher education currently in existence. In this kind of system, he says, people could move more easily from further to higher education - and between institutions - which, above all, would make funding far less complicated.

While at 59, he has no plans to retire, he would love to write a book about history of trade union learning which, he concedes, might make “most people roll their eyes in horror and think ‘how boring can you possible get?’” Clearly, after more than 30 years’ involvement with unions - that is where he feels most at home. “When I was at the Labour party, I was struck by the way party people are much more prone I think to looking at things in terms of individuals - you know, who’s in and who’s out. But unions are a different sort of world where culturally you look much more at people generally in terms of the organisations or the groups of people they belong to... I’m not saying unions are perfect, but I’ve always felt more comfortable in a union than any political world.”



## FE Week Expert

# Changing the funding formula for 16-19 learners

Following the closure of the 16-19 funding formula review consultation at the start of the month, *FE Week* asked Paul Warner, director of employment and skills at the AELP, and Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group, for their thoughts on simplification, funding rates and methodologies.



Simplification is about much more than reducing paperwork. In AELP's view, whilst recent attempts to simplify the post-16 system have been well-intentioned, most have simply altered processes rather than tackling the issue of desirable outcomes head on.

What is needed is an improvement in our ability and willingness to review what we're doing and crucially why we're doing it, to try and en-

**"Foundation Learning can't just be 'simplified' or 'made more flexible' if it is to succeed – it needs an overhaul from the ground up."**

sure that outputs match up with policy intent. Just reducing the number of boxes to tick, or making it easier to understand rates calculations, are not in themselves enough. Whilst there is much that AELP can agree with in the current YPLA consultation on simplification of funding, we believe that the key issue is really maximising the freedom for providers to create bespoke packages of learning for each individual.

There is little to be gained for example from the

current situation whereby unemployed 16/17 year olds cannot study single units of qualification with a provider not holding a Foundation Learning (FL) contract, even though the provider may have an Apprenticeship contract in which those units are being perfectly satisfactorily delivered. Who gains from that?

This is a reflection of an entrenched programme-led structure within young people's provision that does not chime either with SFA's move to a single adult budget, nor with DWP's move to a "black box" approach, where in both cases the fundamental principle is that providers can deliver what is needed by the learner or employer, rather than what a prescribed programme allows.

For YPLA to hold on to programme-led structures post-16 is therefore out of alignment with the general thrust across government for proper responsiveness to the demand for skills.

It is an outdated approach that in essence Professor Wolf was only last year openly criticising.

The funding structure to support this total flexibility should aim to both enable young people to become qualified, and encourage their entry into work.

It should encourage the delivery of both of these elements by rewarding the delivery of both outputs for one person, in terms of provider funding, at a proportionately higher level than the achievement of just one of them.

This would enhance the worth of qualifications by encouraging the attainment of those that are directly relevant to prospects of work.

This desirable output is signally not being addressed by the current structure of FL, which ignores the employers' presence almost completely, even though the desire to increase learners' progression into work is constantly cited as the reason why Entry to Employment was dropped and FL introduced.

Foundation Learning can't just be "simplified" or "made more flexible" if it is to succeed – it needs an overhaul from the ground up.

Just "simplifying" is accepting that "in an ideal world, we wouldn't start from here". Young people's provision, and particularly FL, needs some fundamental changes if it is to result in anything of worth in terms of economic recovery. Simplification should be incidental to this aim, not the other way around.

*Paul Warner is Director of Employment and Skills at AELP*



agenda. One of the many unfortunate consequences of a qualification driven system is that students who find learning easy attract more funding than those who find it difficult; they can take more qualifications and earn their institution more money.

A real attraction of the Wolf Review and the funding reforms that follow is the prospect of an end to a system that systematically directs more funding towards level 3 students compared with those studying at levels 1 and 2 and selective institutions at the expense of the more inclusive. Funding learners rather than qualifications should mean just that - a standard sum per learner.

To the extent that the proposals will simplify the funding system that is also welcome, though it is far from their most important aspect. Unlike some previous 'simplifications' which actually succeeded in making the system considerably more complex, the new system does promise to be simpler, though in ways that are not all that important to colleges. The reduction in the number of programme weights for example makes the system look a little more simple on paper, but will do little to cut bureaucracy.

There is also a risk that simplification will lead to inequity. The 157 group is increasingly concerned about STEM subjects which it is generally accepted are more expensive to teach. The proposals to reduce the number of programme weights will in effect reduce the differential in funding between STEM subjects and others making them less attractive. Taken together with BIS proposals that mean that over 24s will have to take out larger loans if they study a STEM subject there is a risk that moves to increase the focus on STEM will be put in reverse.

It is of course a weakness of the proposals that they only affect part of college provision, and it looks clear that funding for adults will develop in a quite different direction. This is particularly problematic for the 19-24 age group many of whom are following a similar path to 16-18s but a couple of years later.

If we must have two departments it would be good if they could agree on a consistent set of funding principles and the ones set out by DfE/YPLA represent a good starting point. They emphasise the importance of stability in institutional funding; the need for funding to reflect necessary costs, and for the system to avoid introducing perverse incentives. Surely we can all sign up to that.

*Lynne Sedgmore is the Executive Director of 157 Group*

There is much to welcome in the proposals to change the way in which programmes for 16-19 year olds are funded. They clearly build on the Wolf Review which we have also welcomed and put learners and learning rather than the accumulation of qualifications centre stage. They are consistent with the drive to give more freedom to institutions to decide what is best for their learners; and they are based on a clear set of principles which most people would endorse. We in the 157 Group are keen to work with the new Education Funding Agency to make them a success.

**"It looks clear that funding for adults will develop in a quite different direction"**

We are particularly pleased at the proposal that funding should follow learners, not qualifications. One of the clear weaknesses of the current system is that institutions are forced to design students' programmes around the accumulation of qualifications in order to balance the books.

Now colleges and other providers will be trusted to deliver a mix of activities some of which will lead to qualifications and some will not. Although revolutionary in FE it is what happens in virtually every other phase of education.

In one important respect however the funding proposals risk diverging from the Wolf



## FE Week Expert

# Reflecting on the departures of the ‘big guns’



Two big guns in the further education and skills sector this week announced plans to step down. The fact that embargoed government statements on both were issued simultaneously made it look like a dumping operation – a rumour the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills was quick to scotch.

Geoff Russell, chief executive of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), it seems, decided to make an exit last August but was happy to stay on till summer 2012. Odd then that there has been no hint of succession planning. Simon Waugh, chief executive of the National

Apprenticeship Service (NAS), is going quicker – in March. But then most people who know the NAS reckon his chief operating officer, David Way, has been running the show anyway for the best part of a year.

Whatever their reasons, it gives a perfect opportunity to reflect on where they have taken FE in the past year or so. Russell himself is presiding over a downsizing exercise. The SFA saw £250m of college money moved beyond his control to the UKCES last autumn in a pilot plan giving businesses the power to design, develop and purchase vocational training. Some colleges bridled at the move; others saw it as an opportunity for closer employer involvement. The scheme, giving greater Treasury control, was dreamed up in Number 10 and Russell has shown little resistance to such moves. After all, he was seconded from the Treasury to run the Learning and Skills Council and subsequently the SFA after the disastrous 2009 capital building crisis. Favouring the Exchequer in this way has not endeared him to, BIS directors. Supporting direct funding of employers went down like a lead balloon.

Further downsizing of the SFA followed a review in November when it had its powers reduced. This won't have pleased Russell who has always identified closely with those powers. He is prone to talk not of what SFA can do but “what I can do”. And he reminded

journalists at the Association of Colleges (AoC) annual conference last autumn: “I am legally responsible” and “I’m the SFA in body.” Technically true at the time but not now. With around 80 per cent of FE funding being for 16-19s and the unrelenting rise in apprenticeships, in terms of driving things, don't the YPLA, DfE and Treasury increasingly count for more?

Talking of apprenticeships, we recently had FE and skills minister John Hayes’ announcing a one-year minimum for 16-18 apprenticeships, which may yet be extended to older groups. “By setting down a marker about the minimum length of an apprenticeship, we will drive up quality,” said Hayes. But this is not how Waugh saw things as *FE Week* exposed inadequate schemes – often as little as 12 weeks. He insisted NAS was monitoring and assuring quality. But evidence mounted and opposition MPs, notably Gordon Marsden, railed against them until Hayes took action. But not before he announced a record 440,000 learners starting an apprenticeship in 2010-11, 50 per cent up on last year and another 250,000 in the pipeline.

None of this is to belittle the achievements of Russell and Waugh. Martin Doel, AoC chief executive, said: “They leave as converts to the cause of further education and we are grateful for all their hard work and efforts on behalf of colleges and their students.” Hayes praised Russell for the way he turned the SFA into

“an organisation that is playing a key role in promoting and funding FE and giving young people and adults the skills they need...” And thanks to Waugh he said, “Apprenticeships are at the heart of our drive to equip people of all ages with the skills employers need to prosper and compete.”

Against the background of unemployment, particularly with latest 118,000 rise to 2.7m (8.4 per cent), 1.04m young jobless, most consider that apprenticeship and training policy has moved in the right direction. But how sustainable is it, given the NAS's dark mutterings about the impossible assessment costs and unmanageable workloads threatening government ambitions for apprenticeships?

Meanwhile, in colleges the government has created a single adult skills budget for this year, full of flexibility – once they meet their indicative targets. However, college principals are increasingly pointing out, the list of central government indicative priorities, such as wider skills for employment and pre-apprenticeship training, is growing. Just how much will be left for local responsiveness and those long-promised freedoms as unemployment rises? But by then, Russell and Waugh will have moved on long ago.

*Ian Nash is a partner in Nash&Jones Partnership of journalists and media consultants.*

## Finding the balance for working in partnership



Of the many challenges facing the FE Sector today, getting the right balance between working with private training providers and being self-sufficient is one that continues to challenge college principals and their senior leadership teams.

We all know the history of poor franchising and sub contracts, and many of the horror stories that surround colleges and learners involved with unscrupulous and poor quality training providers.

However, amongst all of the hype, hysteria and headlines there are many successful examples of when real partnership working continues to meet the goals and aspirations of many colleges.

So how should it be done? Private training should work along very similar reporting lines to the way that many colleges operate their college departments and directorates. There should be regular review meetings, joint quality assurance methods with partners and open and transparent data management for all partners.

Regardless of the size or value of contracts, senior personnel should meet with college staff on a regular basis to ensure high levels of confidence in the relationship. The aim of these meetings should be to ensure that working in partnership should never create problems – it should solve them.

For any partnership to work between a college and training provider it is crucial that the following key characteristics exist:

- A mutually trusting and transparent relationship at all levels.
- Strong and clear lines of communication
- Appropriate quality assurance arrangements

Providing these essential elements are in place, partnerships are in a position to be able to deliver the following benefits;

- Extend the college's reach into its local community and economy.

**“The aim of these meetings should be to ensure that working in partnership should never create problems- it should solve them.”**

Good training providers can add value to a college's curriculum offer, often by providing niche services in a cost effective and high quality manner.

They have their own network within the relevant business communities, and their own experienced staff who understand the needs of these sectors.

- Supporting the achievement of targets for income and participation.

Good training providers are able to turn

delivery projects around quickly with high success rates. They provide a swift response to opportunities and can be used flexibly to realign resources when challenged with meeting college recruitment and achievement targets.

- Provide a healthy financial contribution to college overheads

Good partnerships are more cost effective. Where there are high levels of trust, partnership delivery can be low risk and provide low application costs to help to deliver programmes economically in today's environment of significantly reduced funding for colleges. In order to streamline their partnership operations many colleges are reducing the number of partners they work with on an annual basis to only a handful.

For the training providers who are selected to be one of the successful few, the future will be one of extended and diversified participation in an increased share of programme provision, student recruitment and work-based training as well as the opportunity to play a greater role in supporting the sector to achieve its planned objectives.

*Mick Cox is Chief Executive of The Skills Network*



# *FE Week gets technical*

*FE Week* brings you a selection of the slides from the Lsect Ultimate Curriculum Planning Workshop.

These slides summarise 19+ classroom and 16+ workplace funding. For official funding rules and guidance visit [www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](http://www.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)

## Technical introduction to 19+ classroom and 16+ workplace funding

Selection of slides from the  
Lsect Ultimate Curriculum Planning Workshop

Nick Linford  
Managing Director of Lsect  
Managing Editor of *FE Week*

**Lsect**  
Learning & skills ~ events,  
consultancy and training

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## The Classroom National Funding formula

19+ classroom provision is funded using a national funding formula introduced in 2008/09

It is applied to every enrolment, so they all have a value

Elements in the demand-led funding formula:

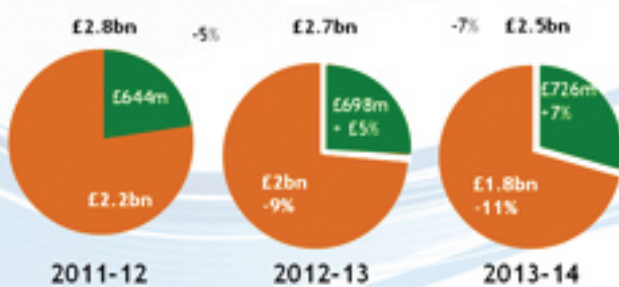
- > Standard Learner Number (SLN)
- > National Funding Rate (NFR)
- > Programme Weighting Factor (PWF)
- > Disadvantage Uplift (DU)
- > Area Cost Uplift (ACU)
- > Success Factor (SF)
- + Additional Learning Support

Formula elements  
multiplied together  
equals maximum  
funding for the  
enrolment

3

## 19+ Investment Strategy (Nov 2011)

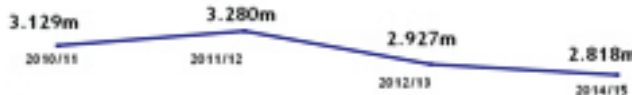
Adult Skills Budget of which min appren expectation



Overall three years:  
Non-appren £ -19%  
Appren min expectation £ +13%  
All Adult Skills Budget £ -12%

Also worth noting  
'Focus at least £100m on SMEs'  
£129m for non-appren loans 2013  
Impact of it being Single Budget  
MCL unchanged for 2012 at £500k  
Changes to entitlement in 2012

Illustrative learner number forecasts



But with a Single Adult Budget it's could go in any direction!

2

## Sources of the DLF funding formula

SLN	Always 'listed' on the online LARA database, with exception of functional skills for non-schools
GLH	
NFR	Set each year nationally = £2,615 in 11/12 and 12/13 2011/11 and 2012/13:
PWF	On the LARA database for the relevant qualification and funding type
DU	Based on an postcode file and the learner home postcode (no uplift, or between 8 and 32%)
ACU	South East England weighting based on the provider location
SF	Calculation based on success rates, where achievement = 1 and non-retained or non-achievement = 0.5

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## Spring College Data Conference

13th March 2012 in London

Book via [www.lsect.com](http://www.lsect.com)



# Lsect

Learning & skills ~ events, consultancy and training

## Funding formula examples for 2012/13

### Example fully-funded 19+

SLN	1.02
NFR	£2,615
PWF	1.2564
DU	1.0946
SPM	1.04
ACU	1.2
SF	0.9
<b>Funding</b>	<b>£4,121</b>

### Co-funded 19+ using example

$NFR - (NFR \times AFI / PF) = \text{Co-funded rate}$

$£2,615 - (2,615 \times 0.5 / 1.545) = £1,769$

$1.02 \text{ SLN} \times £1,769 \text{ CFR} \times 1.545 \text{ PF} = \text{£2,787}$

**Assumed fee =  $(1.02 \times £2,615) / 2 = £1,334$**

**Provider factor 1.545 for 19+**

**Assumed Fee Income per SLN GLH this year =  $(£2,615 / 450) / 2 = £2.90 \text{ per hour}$**

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## On-programme funding instalments

The on-programme funding for workplace funding is the total funding less the funding for achievement\*

The SFA pay monthly on-programme funding instalments based on submitted ILR data

The first month instalment will be worth twice as much as each of the remaining months (n+1 approach)

So, if 12 month course then each month is worth total on-programme funding divided by 13 (with month 1 paid twice)

e.g. £10,000 on-programme funding over 9 months would be £2,000 in first month and £1,000 for the remaining 8 months

\* Achievement is 25% of total, unless an apprenticeship in which case it is 25% of just the main apprenticeship qualification

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## The Workplace National Funding formula

Funded using the Demand-Led Funding formula, which is an enrolment based funding methodology

Therefore, every enrolment has an individual value

Elements in the workplace demand-led funding formula:

- > Standard Learner Number (SLN)
- > National Funding Rate (NFR)
- > Programme Weighting Factor (PWF)
- > Disadvantage Uplift (DU)\*
- > Area Cost Uplift (ACU)

Formula elements multiplied together equals maximum funding for the enrolment

\* Not included for non-appren (previously called Train to Gain)

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## SASE Apprenticeship Funding example

16-18 year-old funding in 2012/13 (Note: 19-24 NFR = £2,615)

Framework 401 elements	SLN	NFR	PW	ACU	DU	Funding
IVQ Cert in Drinks Dispense Systems (QCF) (L2)	0.014	£2,862	1 (A)	1	1.025	£41
Certificate in Cellar Service Installation and Maintenance (QCF) (L2)	0.644	£2,862	1.3 (C)	1	1.025	£2,456
Functional Skills Maths (L1)	0.08	£2,862	1 (A)	1	1.025	£235
Functional Skills English (L1)	0.08	£2,862	1 (A)	1	1.025	£235
<b>Total</b>						<b>£2,966</b>

OP Instal Month 1	£1,478
OP Instal Month 2	£739
OP Instal Month 3	£739

Achievement	£10
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>£2,966</b>

Note: All 19+ Apprenticeships are co-funded (50%) and 25+ have a 20% (NFR £2,092) rate reduction and large employers (1000 staff+) have a further 25% rate reduction

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# FE Week campus round-up



## Kensington and Chelsea students get top tips

A renowned video producer, artist manager and record label boss was on hand to give Kensington and Chelsea students her top tips for success.

Rachel McClelland has more than ten years' experience in the entertainment industry and has worked with some of the biggest names in music, including Dizzee Rascal, Jay Z, Mr Hudson and Kanye West.

As part of her visit she gave students on the Digital Musicians course invaluable career development advice including

information on setting up an Electronic Promo Kit, online publishing for their music and tips on using Twitter, Facebook and MySpace to create an online presence.

She also spoke about music management, music PR and how to become a music entrepreneur.

Music student Leo Stewart said: "I learnt a lot about how to promote myself and got a lot from Rachel's talk that I wouldn't have known myself without doing a lot of research."

## City of Bath College puts best foot forward



The teacher training courses run by City of Bath College are generating impressive results and praise from students.

The recent one-week City and Guilds introduction to teaching and training course saw 100 per cent of students pass with flying colours.

Many of the students on the course have since started teaching, received salary increases at work or progressed on to the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS) – which gives the learner a full teaching qualification.

Two students who attended the Intensive PTTLS teacher training course are registered chiropodists and podiatrists Sirene Cleife and Jackie Penrose, who run the Warminster-based

The Podiatry People and who also work from The Bath Practice in Monmouth Street.

Mrs Cleife said: "We attended the course as our company has an interest in educating our patients about foot health, as well as delivering continuing professional development to other health professionals.

"The course exceeded our expectations.

"It was a fast-paced course which managed to combine a wide range of topics and to present a clear picture of the skills and knowledge needed to become a successful educator."

Mrs Penrose added: "The course has enhanced our current skills as health educators by helping us to adapt our service provision, ensuring our courses include material that will be accessible to everyone."



## Brave Totton College student is a life saver

A student put his skills to the test after rescuing a 90-year-old pensioner.

Dalian Lacey (17), from Totton, who is studying Public Services at Totton College, found the man unconscious on the ground whilst he was on his paper round.

It transpired the man had fallen from his roof whilst trying to carry out a repair and had been on the ground all night.

Dalian is a member of the Army Cadets and his training kicked in by immediately administering first aid, getting the man to his feet, making sure he was warm and secure in his home and then calling an ambulance.

He stayed and waited for the paramedics to arrive, before the pensioner was taken to hospital.

Dalian said: "I just acted upon instinct, I saw someone who needed help, I didn't realise at the time he was minutes from being in a really serious life threatening situation.

"It's a great feeling knowing that you've helped save a life."

## Mirus Academy has big dreams at opening



Students and staff at the new Mirus Academy celebrated the school's official opening with a colourful balloon launch.

More than 200 balloons were released into the sky, each carrying a personal message from students about their dreams for the future in the Mirus Academy.

The Mirus Academy is the first all-through Academy in the Black Country and provides educational provision to pupils from early years, through to further and higher education.

It is sponsored by Walsall College, with the full backing of Walsall Council and its pupils will range from three to 18 years old.

Principal Jacqui Grace said: "It is a wonderfully exciting challenge to create a new Academy for all ages in our community.

Jat Sharma, principal and chief executive of Walsall College, said: "In line with our commitment to create Walsall College graduates through the skills of learning and enterprise, The Mirus Academy also aims to empower pupils to enjoy, develop and sustain a thirst for learning on their route to future success."

## Huntingdonshire Regional College football stars are picked to play for England squad



Three students studying Sport and Exercise Sciences at Huntingdonshire Regional College have been selected to play for the England Colleges Football team.

The college is the only one to secure this many places in the squad, which is the national team for college based players.

It is run in partnership by British Colleges Sport and The Football Association, to develop students who are combining full-time studies with playing an elite standard of football.

The successful players, who have secured a place on the 2012 team, are Max Avory, Jordan

Nicholson and Jake Walton.

Both Max and Jake successfully played for the 2011 England Team.

Although a small college, it continues to be successful both off and on the field, with the football team not only reigning National Elite Colleges Men's Football Champions, for the second year, but also National Elite Inter-Collegiate Cup Champions.

Principal Susanne Stent said: "The college is very proud of the continued achievements of our students, and we are aiming to keep our title of national champions for a third year in 2012."



## Doncaster College student is inspirational



A number of Doncaster College students and staff have won awards in recent months.

Students Danielle Hughes, Kanisha Fullwood and staff member Yvonne Ledger have featured in the Pride in Doncaster Awards and the Best in Education Awards.

Seventeen-year-old Danielle won the Inspirational Young Person of the Year Award at the Pride in Doncaster Awards Ceremony.

Danielle (pictured), of Bentley, in Doncaster, received her award after volunteering at her local youth club for six years, where she earned such awards as first aid and fire marshal.

She also volunteered for the youth council, where she and other young people debated issues facing the local community such as the

rise in bus fares.

Danielle is currently studying childcare Level One at the college and is hoping to progress to Level 2 and 3 before going to university.

She said: "I was really happy to win the award, I wasn't expecting to. My family are really proud."

Kanisha Fullwood won The Personal Achievement Award and Yvonne Ledger won the Best Lunch Person Award at the Best in Education Awards Ceremony.

Kanisha (19) is a third year Life Skills student who has serious medical issues which affect her mobility and can make her feel quite weak.

She passed all her qualifications and participates in all aspects of college life.



## Warrington College is the leader of the pack

The growing partnership between an institute and a rugby league club has seen the development of a new qualification.

Over the years, a partnership between Warrington Collegiate and Warrington Wolves has looked to enhance education, health and welfare of those involved.

The partnership will see the collegiate team and Rugby League academy continue to act as a feeder to the Wolves' Junior Academy system providing opportunities for collegiate players to develop at Warrington Wolves.

The latest development at Warrington Collegiate, supported by the Wolves, is the introduction of a BTEC National in Rugby

League.

During which, students take modules on rugby league with a view to enhancing development, as well as provide them with long term vocational experience in sport.

Modules include coaching badges, referee certificate, sport science, fitness training, tactical and technical knowledge.

Principal Paul Hafren said: "The club plays a significant role in many of our students' lives and right across Warrington."

Player performance manager Ben Lazenby said: "One of our aims is to see a player from the Academy progress onto our academy and succeed to have a career within Rugby League."

## City College Norwich Extreme Sports Therapy Unit takes to the road in new truck



Trainee sports therapists from City College Norwich will practise their skills even further afield in 2012.

The impressive new Renault truck, fully liveried in the Extreme Sports Therapy Unit's colours, will enable the Level 3 Diploma in the Prevention and Management of Sports Injuries students to take their equipment to events at home and abroad.

The Extreme Sports Therapy Unit already has a well-established presence at mountain biking events in the region, offering pre- and post-race sports massage to hundreds of local athletes.

Events students will be attending this year include the Slate Man triathlon in Wales, the Snowdonia Sportive and the Quebrantuhuesos cycling Sportive in Sabiñánigo, Northern Spain in June, as well as a number of national

events for Chain Reaction Cycles and local competitions organised by Thetford MTB Racing.

The truck's attractive livery was designed by City College Norwich Multimedia Developer Tracey Tutt, and was wrapped by former student Paul Dyball at Unique Signs and Graphics.

Student Brett Stanforth (18), from Cromer said: "I went to the Thetford Dusk 'til Dawn event in October, which was a really enjoyable experience, but it was a bit of a struggle with our old trailer:

"Having the truck will make things a lot easier for us.

"It will also give the Extreme Sports Therapy Unit a really professional image and make us stand out to competitors and other businesses at the events we go to."

## Chesterfield College goes hands on for art



the local area, attended special events at the college to showcase the technology in action.

One of the world's leading iPad artists and art lecturer at the college, Mik Godley, was on hand to demonstrate how to use the technology to digitally create artwork such as sketched life drawing and landscapes.

Also in attendance were specialist 'Apple Educators' who demonstrated a wide range of creative applications the iPad offers, from 3D imaging to music production.

Head of art and design at Chesterfield College Jeremy Asquith said: "I noticed many of our students are carrying and/or using mobile digital technology to record visual responses. These will be the sketchbooks of the future.

"If we don't keep ahead our curriculum will not be current and we will be failing the students. We wanted to look at the relationship between traditional techniques and future trends to see how they can work together."

Chesterfield College has embraced the latest developments in creative technologies by incorporating iPads into its Art and Design directorate.

Both Pupils from Tibshelf and Lady Manners Schools, as well as creative professionals from

## Filton College students work with charity

A college has teamed up with housing provider 1625 Independent People to solve issues for local young people.

Students on Building and Construction Courses at Filton College will take on repair jobs in the charity's properties.

Groups of four or five students and their tutor will take on repair and maintenance jobs as part of their course.

Also young people housed by Independent People will do up their properties as part of an introduction to the construction course.

Independent People support 16-25 year olds who are homeless by providing housing, support and advice.

The charity and college are in also talks with local authorities and housing associations with a view to renovating empty properties to house homeless people.

Chief executive Dom Wood said: "This partnership is a brilliant opportunity to help turn a raft of problems into positive outcomes for young people."





## FE Week Events...

# FE seeking some stability

**Nick Summers**

**@summersnicholas**

EMFEC celebrated its one hundredth anniversary with an FE star-studded conference in Daventry last week.

The event invited key leaders, commentators and policy makers to reflect on some of the biggest announcements made in FE recently, including the departure of Geoff Russell, chief executive of the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), and Simon Waugh, chief executive of the National Apprenticeship Service.

Despite losing two of his right hand men, John Hayes MP, minister of state for further education, skills and lifelong learning, used the conference to call for "stability" and "certainty" in the sector.

"Having secured the budget, I want to now make sure we get it right in terms of how we can frame the future around adult learning," Mr Hayes said.

"We just need some stability and some certainty about the future."

He added: "It will not be the imposition of policy by me, on you."

"Part of the concerns about previous regimes was that the approach wasn't sufficiently consultative."

"It seem as though the government had an idea, imposed it and then asked afterwards."

Mr Hayes was not taking any questions from the media due to time constraints.

Nick Linford, managing director of Lsect and managing editor of *FE Week*, made the opening presentation, and said there could be a significant "shift of power" once Mr Russell and Mr Waugh leave.

Mr Linford said: "I think one of the reasons Geoff is going is because of a shift of power towards the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES)."

"Michael Davis, chief executive at the UKCES, is very much promoting a new policy where your money won't actually be given to you by the SFA - but to employers."

"This is at a time when the SFA are losing staff and thus trying to reduce the number of contracts they are managing."

EMFEC has been a membership body for FE colleges in the East Midlands since 1912.

The body, which holds a charitable status, offers a variety of services to both colleges and training providers, including conferences, networking opportunities, facilitating collaborative work and educational support.

EMFEC also provides the Association of Colleges (AoC) East Midlands with responsive representational services.

The centenary conference, entitled "An audience with...", held a number of panel discussions with key players from all parts of the FE sector.

Toni Pearce, vice president (FE) for the National Union of Students (NUS), said she was unsure how employers would be held accountable if they were funded directly for apprenticeships, as proposed by the UKCES in the recent 'Employer Ownership of Skills' report.

"How will that accountability work for those employers who are directly funded by government?" Pearce said.

"There's no real method for accountability to make sure students are getting a quality experience there."

She added: "To just have the word of the employer, which is kind of what we feel like we have at the moment, and success rates, makes that almost impossible to hold them to account for the public money they are being funded with."

Toni said it is particularly difficult for the NUS to communicate with learners on poor quality apprenticeships.

"It's actually really hard to find out what the quality is like on the ground, and engage with apprentices who are working in short term or low quality apprenticeships," she said.

"It puts them in a difficult position when we're telling them to feed back."

The conference was also attended by a number of apprenticeship and vocational training providers, including JHP Group Ltd, IMPACT apprenticeships and TQ Training Group Ltd.

Jim Chambers, chief executive of JHP Group Ltd, said the ongoing coverage around short apprenticeships was "hyping" the issue

**"It will not be the imposition of policy by me, on you"**

out of proportion and "degenerating" the apprenticeship brand.

"Any self respected provider wouldn't be offering any short apprenticeship programmes," Mr Chambers said.

"We've got a hyping of these...what are frankly degenerating the brand."

Mr Chambers said despite working through "one of the toughest years" in his career, he was "cautiously optimistic" about the recent announcements made by the SFA.

He said: "We're very much into employability and vocational training, and I am encouraged by some of the language coming from the SFA, which is almost aping that coming from Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)."

"I'm cautiously optimistic and I actually believe we can help influence, if we're positive, the policy makers."

The afternoon session included a discussion

about the perspective of sector membership bodies, debated by Martin Doel, chief executive of the Association of Colleges (AoC), David Hughes, chief executive of NIACE, and Paul Warner, director of employment and Skills at the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP).

Mr Warner said: "In terms of whether Hayes' rhetoric will ever be lived up to, I suppose I could be slightly provocative in saying probably not."

"I don't think that's anything against John Hayes, but ultimately he's a government minister."

"He's at the top of a big civil service and by the time the rhetoric goes into the civil service machine, it comes out one way or another looking remarkably similar to whatever it was that went before it."

"It's very difficult to turn rhetoric into reality."

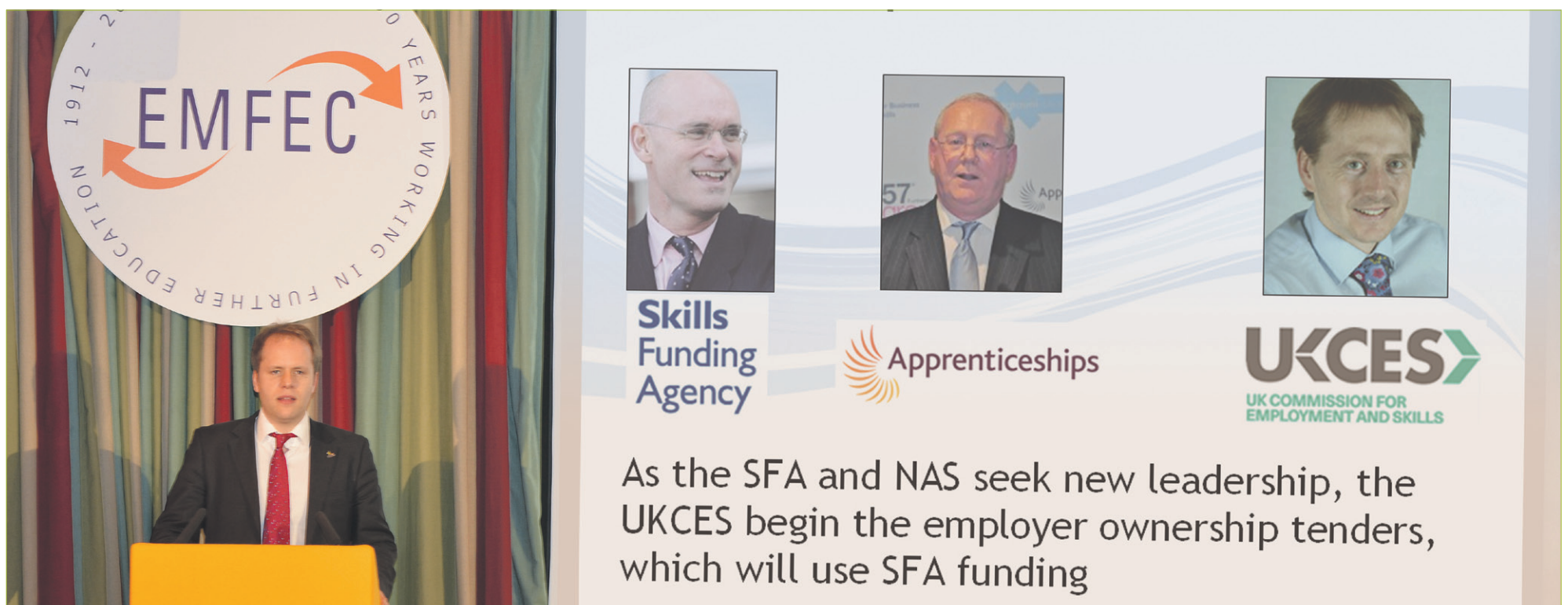
Mr Doel added: "I did bash on at him at length the other day, about, what you're attempting here is cultural change."

"Cultural change takes a period to embed and it won't just happen because you make a few policy announcements, and no matter how many infusing speeches you make, it won't happen."

"It won't happen in colleges, it won't happen in providers, it won't happen in officials, it won't happen in funders, unless it has time and some degree of consistency to the message."

EMFEC also hosted a celebratory dinner on the night before the conference, inviting delegates to pledge money to the Helena Kennedy Foundation (HKF) and take part in a charity auction.

The guests raised just shy of £2,000 for HKF, a charity which helps provide financial bursaries, mentoring and support to a number of disadvantaged students from the further and adult education sectors.



Nick Linford, Managing Editor of *FE Week* 'Setting the Scene...' at the EMFEC Centenary Conference in Daventry





John Hayes, minister for FE, and Paul Eeles, CEO of EMFEC, take to the podium

It is not too late to follow and contribute with #EMFEC100



Caption competition: What is John Hayes saying to Wes Streeting? Tweet your answer with #EMFEC100

Guess the ex-principal who won this fetching hat, sunglasses and not-so-matching bermuda shorts in the EMFEC raffle. Tweet your answer using the hashtag #EMFEC100 for a chance to win an FE Week mug.



Chris Morecroft, former Principal and member of EMFEC board takes the microphone



Bobby Upple, Toni Pearce, John Bingham, John Allen 'In Conversation' Pictures by Nick Linford







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To be responsible for the strategic management of Human Resources and Health and Safety. This includes the development of all aspects of HR policy and procedure in line with best practice in the sector and current legislation. You will ensure the provision of a wide range of high quality services for managers, the executive team and governors.

### Director of Finance & Funding

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For an informal conversation about either role please call the Principal Tim Grant on **01325 503081**

**Director Salary - £46,719 to £61,533**

Closing Date: Wednesday 15 February

**Darlington College is committed to safeguarding children and successful candidates will be CRB checked.**

This college is an equal opportunities employer.



### DEPUTY PRINCIPAL, ENTERPRISE & INNOVATION £90k plus PRP

City College Norwich is committed to supporting our students to realise their full potential. With the right support and guidance the possibilities are endless. With over 14,000 students, including one in three of Norfolk's 16-19 students, City College Norwich works closely with key regional employers and business leaders to ensure we provide a curriculum which equips our students with the right blend of skills and knowledge for the future.

We have high ambitions for our students and our college. In September 2011, along with four other Further Education colleges, we created a new company, Generator Enterprises Ltd, to develop and embed entrepreneurialism within our learning communities. We've also recently invested £1m in our new Start Up Lounge where students gain practical support in how to turn their ideas into real business opportunities. This role will be key to translating ambition into action and establishing City College Norwich as a leading Entrepreneurial College. You'll help to diversify and grow our income streams and ensure we continue to work closely with the key players in our regional economy.

Whilst direct experience of FE isn't essential, you will need a strong affinity with the sector and a keen insight into the benefits to be gained from colleges working in collaboration with key stakeholders. With exceptional communication skills, you should be well networked and outward looking - with one eye firmly on future opportunities and a successful track record in your career to date.

To find out more visit [www.ccndeputy.co.uk](http://www.ccndeputy.co.uk) or contact Mike Galloway on **07765 595758** or Trudy Searle on **07791 090141**. Closing date: 24 February.

City College Norwich welcomes applicants from all sections of the community and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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### Quality Manager

**£34,451 - £37,634**

We are looking for an enthusiastic candidate who can demonstrate success in implementing effective quality improvement strategies. You will play a central role in the design and implementation of the college self-assessment process. The Quality Manager will work closely with department managers to secure improvement in teaching and learning and college success rates.

**Closing date for applications is 6th February 2012.**

CV's will NOT be accepted. For more information Success Profiles and application packs can be downloaded from [www.kidderminster.ac.uk](http://www.kidderminster.ac.uk); email; [personnel@kidderminster.ac.uk](mailto:personnel@kidderminster.ac.uk) or contact Human Resources, Kidderminster College, Market Street, Kidderminster DY10 1LX Tel No. (01562) 512068 quoting job reference. **Job Ref 20/12**





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Closing date for applications is Monday 30th January.

For an informal chat please call Mike Craddock on 01823 337655.

To apply please send your CV, stating whether you are an IT or MIS specialist, to Steve Hutchinson, FE Associates, 1 High Street, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 3PG or email: [recruitment@feassociates.com](mailto:recruitment@feassociates.com)



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## BISHOP BURTON College

One Team. One Bishop Burton.

### Vice Principal

Salary c£80,000 plus relocation package and benefits

Bishop Burton College is a thriving specialist Further and Higher Education College, situated near the market town of Beverley in East Yorkshire. Graded Good by Ofsted in 2009 and winner of the prestigious UK Excellence Awards in 2011, the College has a strong culture of enterprise and commercial success. With a turnover of £21m, we offer our 3,000 learners some of the most impressive vocational facilities in the country.

We are now seeking a Vice Principal who will be responsible for shaping the development and future direction of the curriculum, fostering a culture of innovation and ultimately driving up standards in order for us to achieve Outstanding in our next inspection. You will be results driven, with the leadership and management experience to influence both internal and external stakeholders and to motivate and inspire staff to fully engage with quality improvement.

This role will be both challenging and dynamic, requiring the successful candidate to translate the College's vision into successful implementation. You will demonstrate a track record of delivering significant quality improvements within the Education sector and will demonstrate experience of developing Curriculum and programmes to meet stakeholder needs.

This is a fantastic opportunity to work in a commercially astute environment and if you feel you have the expertise to make a significant contribution to our continued success then we would like to hear from you.

We are working in partnership with AoC Create on this important appointment and you can find all the details you will need at [www.aoccreate.co.uk/bishopburton](http://www.aoccreate.co.uk/bishopburton)

For an informal discussion about the post please contact Harpreet Jossan on 0207 299 6985 or email [harpreet\\_jossan@aoc-create.co.uk](mailto:harpreet_jossan@aoc-create.co.uk)

Closing date for applications Sunday 29th January 2012

Selection will be held in the College week beginning Monday 20th February 2012



[www.aoccreate.co.uk/bishopburton](http://www.aoccreate.co.uk/bishopburton)





# FE Week needs your stories for its National Apprenticeship Week supplement

IN  
PARTNERSHIP  
WITH

**ncfe**  
ncfe.org.uk

**FE WEEK & ME**

## Make sure you vote online in our FE Week & Me competition

We asked students to send in a 500-word article explaining what brought them to college, along with their hopes, fears and aspirations.

Step 1: read the stories at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/feweekandme](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/feweekandme)

Step 2: choose your favourite and then cast your vote by 1st February.

The winner will be announced in FE Week on the 6th February.

FE Week will be publishing a special printed supplement, in partnership with NCFE, and we want your stories now.

If you know an apprentice with a huge success story, an under appreciated employer or a training provider delivering with a particularly innovative model, please contact us via [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk), or by calling our news desk on 020 3582 6416.

Alternatively, notify us of any event you're holding by tweeting us (@FEWeek) using the official National Apprenticeship Week hashtag: #NAW2012.

## FE Week Sudoku challenge

5		8	9		7			1
				2				3
	2	7	8	3				6
		1	4		6			2
	6	5				8	9	
8			2		9	6		
3				1	5	2	7	
9				4				
1			7		2	3		8

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

8		1				5		4
	7		9	8	2		3	
1			3		6			2
		3		7		9		8
2		6	5		8			1
	6		4	2	5		1	
9		4				2		3

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## Last Week's solutions

9	2	7	8	6	4	1	5	3
5	6	1	7	2	3	8	4	9
3	8	4	9	1	5	7	6	2
4	7	8	1	5	2	9	3	6
1	9	3	6	4	8	5	2	7
6	5	2	3	9	7	4	8	1
7	4	5	2	3	1	6	9	8
8	3	9	5	7	6	2	1	4
2	1	6	4	8	9	3	7	5

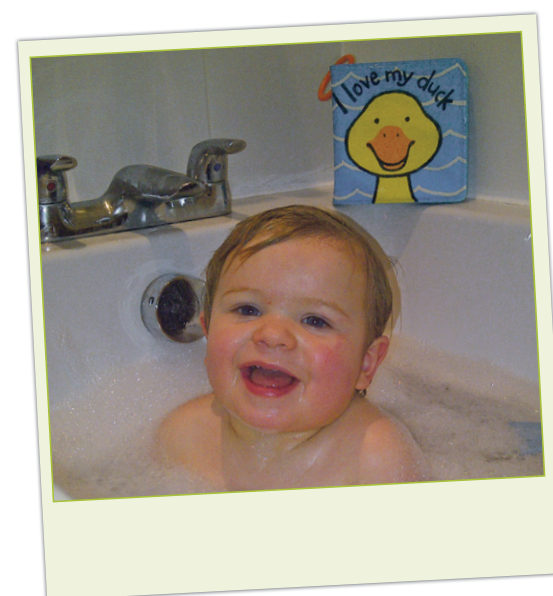
Difficulty:  
**EASY**

4	3	5	1	9	6	2	8	7
8	1	9	7	5	2	3	6	4
7	6	2	8	3	4	1	9	5
9	2	1	6	4	8	5	7	3
6	4	7	5	2	3	8	1	9
3	5	8	9	7	1	6	4	2
2	9	6	3	8	7	4	5	1
1	7	3	4	6	5	9	2	8
5	8	4	2	1	9	7	3	6

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



*"Mostly this week I have been looking for my 'I love my duck' book"*

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford